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(MIDEAST ARMS)

LONDON (UPI)--THE SOVIET UNION AND THE UNITED STATES AGREED IN PRINCIPLE NOT TO RENEW THEIR ARMS LIFT TO THE COMBATANTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST, DIPLOMATIC SOURCES SAID TODAY.

THIS UNDERSTANDING OF THE SUPERPOWERS WAS AN IMPORTANT DRIVING FORCE BEHIND ACCEPTANCE BY ISRAEL AND EGYPT OF THE CEASE-FIRE, THE SOURCES SAID.

THE SUPERPOWERS LEFT THEIR RESPECTIVE CLIENT GOVERNMENTS IN NO DOUBT THAT THEY WOULD RECEIVE NO NEW MAJOR WEAPONS SHIPMENTS IF THEY CHOSE TO GO ON FIGHTING, THE DIPLOMATIC SOURCES SAID.

NEITHER APPARENTLY COULD AFFORD TO FACE SUCH EVENTUALITY, THE SOURCES SAID. BOTH SIDES WERE ALREADY RUNNING OUT OF IMPORTANT WEAPONS WHEN THE SOVIET AND AMERICAN ARMS LIFTS WERE SET IN MOTION.

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